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22) The purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide of claim 21, wherein said polypeptide has one or several equivalent amino acid substitutions.

23) A purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide that is a soluble secreted  $\alpha_2\delta$ -1 subunit polypeptide, wherein the amino acid sequence of said polypeptide is an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO:15; SEQ ID NO:16; and SEQ ID NO: 17.

24) The purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide of claim 23, wherein said polypeptide has one or several equivalent amino acid substitutions.

25) A purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide that is a soluble secreted  $\alpha_2\delta$ -1 subunit polypeptide, wherein the amino acid sequence of said polypeptide is an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:15.

26) A purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide that is a soluble secreted  $\alpha_2\delta$ -1 subunit polypeptide, wherein the amino acid sequence of said polypeptide is an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:16.

27) A purified or isolated recombinant polypeptide that is a soluble secreted  $\alpha_2\delta$ -1 subunit polypeptide, wherein the amino acid sequence of said polypeptide is an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:17.

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